

ORIGINAL

DRAFT RECOVERY PLAN
FOR THE
NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT, the public information meeting was taken before LeAnne Law, Certified Shorthand Reporter, on Tuesday, May 22, 2007, beginning at the hour of 6:30 p.m., at the Douglas County Fairgrounds Conference Hall, 2110 S.W. Frear Street, in the City of Roseburg, County of Douglas, State of Oregon.

APPEARANCES

PRESIDING OFFICIAL:

Robert Ruesink, Retired
US Fish and Wildlife Service

PANEL MEMBERS:

Dave Wesley, Deputy Regional Director
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Recovery Team Leader

Miel Corbett
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Assistant Project Leader

REPORTED BY:

LINDA CRAGO & ASSOCIATES, LLC
Freelance Court Reporters

BY: LeANNE LAW, CSR

836 West Military	Eugene:	(541) 683-1314
Suite 210	Roseburg:	(541) 673-6628
Roseburg, Oregon 97470	FAX:	(541) 673-2180

1 MR. RUESINK: Good evening. On behalf of
2 the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, I welcome you
3 to this public meeting on the Draft Recovery Plan for
4 the Northern Spotted Owl. My name is Robert Ruesink.
5 The last name is spelled R-u-e-s-i-n-k. I will be
6 serving as the presiding official for this listening
7 session.

8 My role is to conduct the session in order
9 that we receive your comments accurately and for the
10 record. I am not involved in any decision-making
11 involving this issue.

12 Here with me at the front table also are
13 representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
14 To my immediate right is Dave Wesley. Dave is the
15 deputy regional director of the Pacific Region and the
16 team leader for the Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Team.

17 To Dave's right is Miel Corbett. Miel is
18 the assistant project leader for the Oregon Fish &
19 Wildlife office in Portland.

20 We do have a court reporter here this
21 evening to make sure that we get an accurate record of
22 comments and statements that you make to us on this
23 draft recovery plan.

24 Next to the meeting room over to my left is
25 an information room. Some of you may have been over

1 there already. It's where we do have a lot of written
2 and display materials to provide information about the
3 draft recovery plan for the NSO.

4 We also have staff from the US Fish and
5 Wildlife Service, from the Forest Service, and from the
6 Bureau of Land Management in that room to help answer
7 any questions you might have.

8 At this point I'd like to introduce Dave
9 Wesley, who will give a presentation on the draft
10 recovery plan. Dave.

11 MR. WESLEY: Thank you, Bob. Can everybody
12 hear me? I think I'm going to walk down here and
13 actually do this from the front. I'm going to take just
14 a few minutes and walk through what we did with the
15 recovery plan and what you can expect.

16 Some of you may not have had an opportunity
17 to read the recovery plan or perhaps you've read various
18 things about the recovery plan, so I thought I'd take
19 just a few minutes and walk through what we spent the
20 last year working on and give you an overview before we
21 receive your comments.

22 Just for some background information, the
23 norther spotted owl (NSO) was listed in 1990 as a
24 threatened species. This follows on after the
25 Interagency Scientific Committee talked about that in a

1 report that was dated in 1990 as well.

2 In 1992 the Fish and Wildlife Service
3 provided critical habitat for the NSO, and in 1992 there
4 was also a draft recovery plan that was prepared by
5 another recovery team. That draft was never made final.
6 It was completed in the second form in December of 1992
7 but was never made final.

8 And in 1994 the administration at that time
9 came out with the Northwest Forest Plan, which was
10 deemed to be the federal contribution for the recovery
11 of the spotted owl, a further reason why we don't have
12 it done.

13 And between that and 2004 a lot of research
14 was done on the NSO. A lot of information was provided
15 to scientists and a lot of different research was done.

16 And as far as our ongoing responsibilities
17 under the Endangered Species Act, we're required to
18 conduct a review of the species every five years.

19 There was a review done in 2004 under
20 contract to a private consulting firm, and they
21 completed that five-year review in 2004. That basically
22 serves as an excellent document to summarize all of the
23 information about owls.

24 So when we started our plan, we were
25 fortunate that we had many of the documents to refer to

1 as well as the 2004 five-year review, which, like I
2 said, did an excellent job of summarizing all the
3 information to that point.

4 What is in the recovery plan? The recovery
5 plan is basically a road map to allow folks to look at
6 what is necessary to take the species off the list.

7 First of all, there's a strategy. What is
8 necessary? What do you want to do? How do you get
9 there? What is the strategy? What are some objectives?
10 How do we go about developing the specific objectives?

11 You have to have some measurable criteria.
12 What is it that you're going to be able to look for? We
13 really worked hard on the measurable part of it.
14 Looking at the plan, there's some very detailed
15 descriptions about those criteria and what they are.
16 It's very important that they be measurable, we all
17 agree on what it is we're looking for and how we measure
18 that.

19 There's also specific recovery actions that
20 are necessary that are outlined in the recovery plan.

21 And I want to remind everybody the recovery
22 plan is advisory only. It does not have any force of
23 law. It's not a regulation. It's an advisory document
24 and it doesn't contain any regulatory authorities. So
25 there's nothing that we can make people do as a result

1 of the recovery plan.

2 So how do we go about doing that? We
3 started this process in April of 2006. The plan was
4 developed initially and completed by December of 2006.
5 We sent it to Washington. There was some review. They
6 asked us to look at other options under the plan, and
7 some additions were done, and those revisions were
8 completed, and the plan was published in April of 2007.

9 There's currently a 60-day comment period
10 that we're asking for folks to be able to provide
11 comments on. That ends right now on the 25th of June, I
12 believe, but we are likely that we're going to be
13 extending that. We received a request for extension,
14 several of those. I don't have an official date yet
15 when it will be, but it will probably be extended.

16 If you know what comments you'd like to make
17 and you already have your comments, I encourage you to
18 go ahead and get them in early, but there is a
19 possibility that we are going to extend it for another
20 60 days.

21 We also committed to having a public
22 meeting. There's no requirement for us to do that, but
23 we felt that this was a subject of interest and of such
24 import for the public that we would do a public meeting
25 in each state.

1 In fact, we're going to do two in Oregon.
2 This one is the first one. We're doing tomorrow night
3 in Redding, California, and we're doing one next week in
4 Portland and then also next week in Lacey, a suburb of
5 Tacoma. But we will be doing four public meetings.

6 And our goal is to have the final plan
7 completed in the public and Federal Register by April of
8 2008.

9 So how did we get to there? We had a
10 recovery team that was providing advice to the service
11 as it developed it.

12 And I want to, again, advise folks that this
13 is a service document. All of the recovery team members
14 may not agree with all the information that's in there.
15 We work for a consensus and we try to get there, but
16 they may not all agree with all the stuff that is there.
17 So it is a service document that is advised by the
18 recovery team.

19 We did have 12 members on the recovery team.
20 We tried to get initially and throughout the process as
21 good a representation as we could. We had five federal
22 land management agencies that were involved: Fish and
23 Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the
24 Park Service, the Fish and -- start again -- Fish and
25 Wildlife Service, The Bureau of Land Management, the

1 Forest Service, the BIA, and I'm missing one.

2 AUDIENCE SPEAKER: Park service.

3 MR. WESLEY: Park Service. Thank you very
4 much. The Park Service.

5 And so the three -- besides several agencies
6 we had the three states involved, a representative from
7 Washington, Oregon, and California; and we had folks
8 from the timber industry, two folks from the timber
9 industry; and we had two folks from environmental
10 organizations.

11 So we did have 12 members of the team.
12 Several of those members are here tonight, and they'll
13 be -- in fact, I'll go ahead and recognize them now.
14 John Siperek.

15 John, will you raise your hand.

16 John is with California. He was our big
17 California representative. Lowell Diller, is one of the
18 industry representatives. Ed Murphy is another one of
19 the industry representatives. Mike Cafferata is from
20 the State of Oregon, and Lenny Young is from the State
21 of Washington, and Mike Haske over here from the Bureau
22 of Land Management.

23 So those are some of the members of the
24 team, and they're here to be able to interact with you
25 later on in the program.

1 And I did mention the two conservation
2 folks. I forgot to mention those. Again, there were
3 some from the conservation community, one from the
4 National Center for Conservation Science and Policy and
5 one from the National Audubon Society. So we think we
6 did have a good representation of where we were.

7 The team was very active. We met either in
8 person or via conference call almost 30 times within the
9 ESA. We did look at and heavily rely on information
10 that we got from science. We conducted three different
11 types of panels where we had 50 scientists or managers
12 that are actively involved in spotted owl work or
13 spotted owl management to get them to inform us about
14 some of the science that they were working on from the
15 management action and to help us identify the threats,
16 some of the actions and criteria that we would be able
17 to develop to do that.

18 We built from existing frameworks including
19 the draft recovery plan and the Northwest Forest Plan.
20 What kept coming up over and over again was the
21 information that the structure in the original plan was
22 probably a pretty good one and we should look at staying
23 at that kind of information after.

24 Some of the portions of the document are
25 already peer reviewed, and I'll talk about peer review

1 in a minute, but we wanted to make sure that the biology
2 was right, so the whole biology section of the plan has
3 been peer reviewed, and we feel it's a good
4 representation of the biology in the plan.

5 So what are the recovery objectives? It's
6 the kind of thing you would see in most recovery plans.
7 I've been in this business for almost 34 years, and it's
8 not too dissimilar from a lot of the recovery plans that
9 we see.

10 A lot of them talk about populations. There
11 are large contingencies of them. They occur throughout
12 the historic range.

13 The next one that -- obviously if you've got
14 populations, then you need the habitat to support them,
15 and you also have to have the habitat spread throughout
16 the range.

17 And the third one is you have to deal with
18 the threats. One of those threats hanging over the
19 population or the habitat is how do you mitigate or
20 manage for those kinds of threats? How do you eliminate
21 those threats so that the species is likely to be able
22 to stay recovered? First of all, you've got to recover,
23 then stay recovered.

24 One of the things that we learned early on
25 is there is a threat from the barred owl that has not

1 been discussed or noticed in a lot of the previous
2 literature that was done, so it's a relatively new
3 threat.

4 There's a concern about the barred owl
5 coming in and competing with the spotted owl and
6 actually displacing it from its area.

7 Also habitat loss and modification is also a
8 key factor. When we listed the owl, it was loss of
9 habitat and regulatory mechanisms. Well, we think we
10 have some very good mechanisms in place. The owl has
11 been listed, but we don't want to lose sight of the fact
12 that we continue to protect and monitor the habitat.

13 The barred owl has perhaps got a fair amount
14 of press is how do you deal with the barred owl. And
15 one of the things that we talked about doing was forming
16 the barred owl working group. That's one of the first
17 recommendations in the plan so that we could have a
18 group of scientists and managers that work together to
19 look at that threat and give us some guidance on how to
20 proceed forward dealing with that. They want to be able
21 to conduct research so that we can better understand the
22 threat.

23 And then once we understand that to proceed
24 with some kind of experimental removal to see if in fact
25 there is a relationship between removing barred owls and

1 some response -- positive response by the spotted owl.

2 How do we do that? Where do we do that?

3 How large a scale do we do it? How often do we have to
4 do that? There's a lot of questions that we need to
5 look at before we proceed on any kind of a large-scale
6 project of that nature.

7 When you get to habitat, the plan is a
8 little different than any other plan that we've done
9 before in that it talks about two different kinds of
10 options. There are two options in the plan that
11 describe how you would protect habitat.

12 Option 1 is pretty much the standard that
13 you've seen before. It models on a lot of stuff that
14 was done in some of that earlier work where you have
15 distinct areas that are outlined on a map. They are
16 specific reserves that are clearly identified and they
17 are reserves that are set aside. There are specific
18 areas where -- actually that are targeted.

19 These areas are called managed owl
20 conservation areas, lovingly called MOCAs. So we have
21 another new vernacular for you in the agency. If you're
22 familiar with the owl, then you're familiar with DCAs,
23 designated conservation area, or the HCAs, habitat
24 conservation areas. Our moniker is MOCAs, managed owl
25 conservation areas.

1 MOCAs in the plan total about 7.7 million
2 acres. The maps are there, and if you go into the room
3 next door, you can look at some of those maps. You'll
4 see that they're about 7.7 acres -- 7.7 million acres.

5 Option 2 also relies on habitat blocks,
6 because, like I said earlier, the science points us back
7 to the fact that habitat blocks in large areas of
8 reserved land set aside for protection is really
9 critical to make sure that the owls are protected.

10 But it doesn't rely upon necessarily
11 specifically prescribed areas on a map. What it does is
12 provides a set of rules to guide land managers on how
13 they designate those.

14 We went back to the science that was used to
15 establish Option 1 where they talk about the number of
16 pairs of owls that are along with the pair, how far
17 apart they need to be, and if you have groups of owls
18 that are smaller than that. The initial pair was 20
19 pair and now there's only 19. What is the distance that
20 they need to be apart and some other parameters we used
21 to develop the rule set. And then we apply that rule
22 set and try to make it work on the ground.

23 So rather than just provide the public with
24 a set of rules and try to figure out how that will
25 actually look, what we did is we, as a group, sat down

1 and said okay, how would we take that set of rules and
2 apply it on the ground? What is an example of that so
3 far?

4 So what you see in Option 2 is
5 essentially -- is essentially an example. It's not
6 necessarily what Option 2 would look like. It's an
7 example of what it could be. It's an example of what
8 the team came up with.

9 And the example that we have there -- and
10 one thing I should mention is it could be more or less
11 than Option 1 depending upon how you put the -- put the
12 controlled areas on the ground or the reserves on the
13 ground. You could actually have more or possibly even
14 less.

15 But the example that we used in the recovery
16 plan has about just under 7 million acres in it. So
17 you'll see there is about a 700,000-acre difference, but
18 it's based on the same science, based on the same
19 underlying data.

20 In both options it's important to recognize
21 that the habitat blocks, or the MOCAs, were established
22 in 10 of the 12 provinces. The owl was mapped in
23 physiographic provinces. There's 10 of them that are
24 described physiographically. I think maybe you're
25 familiar with those.

1 There were two areas where we didn't feel
2 that there was a value of doing that. Both of those are
3 excluded in both options, Option 1 and Option 2.

4 In both cases they include less land than
5 the Northwest Forest Plan LSR, so it doesn't include all
6 of the LSRs.

7 And the MOCAs contain only federal land and
8 exclude virtually all of the private forest. One of the
9 things we did in Option 1 was tried to exclude all
10 private land. We tried to base this on federal land and
11 tried to make this subsequent recovery work just on
12 federal land if we possibly could.

13 One of the criteria for listing how will we
14 know when we get there, one of the things is you need to
15 have a stable or increasing population trend. One of
16 the questions we're asked a lot is, "What is the
17 number?" You know, how many owls do we need? It's
18 very, very difficult to get an absolute number or try to
19 manage a number.

20 What we're looking to do is manage for a
21 population trend, a stable or increasing trend over a
22 10-year period of time. That needs to be
23 well-distributed, that population, throughout the range
24 of the owl.

25 If there's sufficient habitat in the

1 conservation areas, be they MOCAs, managed owl
2 conservation, or habitat reserves established under
3 Option 2.

4 If the threats, the barred owl specifically,
5 are managed.

6 And the fifth one is that there is a
7 monitoring plan established. The ESA requires that in
8 the recovery plan that one of the things that we have to
9 have is time before we delist anything would be to have
10 a plan in place that we could monitor to make sure that
11 it happens so we don't have to put the species back on
12 the list.

13 It's important to recognize that there are
14 recovery actions. There's 37 specific actions that are
15 outlined in the plan. Those actions are explained in
16 both Option 1 and Option 2, and there's basically four
17 categories of those actions.

18 The first one is management actions. What
19 kind of things can we do on the land, how would you
20 manage for prey species, how would you manage for a
21 particular aspect of a forest manager or certain
22 horticultural practices. Those are management actions.

23 The second one is research actions. What
24 kinds of research do we need to do? Research on barred
25 owl, research on fire, dealing with some of the impact

1 on fire, and those kinds of things.

2 Third one would be regulatory actions. Are
3 there actions that we can do to ease the regulatory
4 process to perhaps streamline how habitat conservation
5 plans are done or how federal agencies control one
6 another are regulatory actions.

7 And the fourth one is monitoring actions.
8 Again, you need to monitor the population. We need to
9 monitor habitat.

10 So how do we know that it's recovered and
11 how much do we think this is all going to cost? Well,
12 if all the actions are implemented successfully, we
13 estimate that we can do that in as few as 30 years and
14 for approximately \$200 million.

15 One of the things that we also committed to
16 do as we went through it, because we want this plan to
17 be based on the science, is to insure that the science
18 that we used is correctly used and correctly applied and
19 committed to doing peer review as we were developing the
20 plan.

21 We plan to use two different processes. The
22 first one is we contracted with two professional
23 societies to ask them to go to their members and to do
24 an evaluation of the plan. We're using the American
25 Ornithologists Union, AOU, and the Society for

1 Conservation Biology. Those are the two professional
2 organizations. We have asked for two reviews from each
3 of those, so we'll get four reviews from that.

4 We've also used a fair amount of science
5 from many of the owl researchers. So what we did is we
6 had a direct questionnaire. We sent a direct
7 questionnaire to scientists whose data we used and asked
8 them specifically about did we interpret the science
9 correctly and other questions they may have with regard
10 to that.

11 So it's important to us that we get the
12 review and we get the information and the feedback on
13 that.

14 So what are the next steps? We did publish
15 the draft in April. Like I said, we're doing these four
16 public meetings. We're going to have peer review.
17 Hopefully the peer review will come in during the
18 comment period. We have every intention and hope that
19 they will be delivering for us on peer review. And our
20 goal, again, is to finalize this plan by April of 2008.

21 So who to contact? We're here to hear from
22 you tonight. There are comment cards. There's an
23 opportunity for comments in the other room as well.
24 There are stations for -- if you're interested you can
25 walk around and see some of the maps and some of the

1 displays that we have in there. We're anxious to get
2 those.

3 We'll take your calls. Paul or -- basically
4 we prefer that you send them to us in writing, and
5 there's the contact information there. We also have an
6 owl website that you can get to and get some information
7 from that.

8 So that's a quick overview of sort of what
9 we did and how we got to being here tonight, and we're
10 anxious now to hear from you on what your thoughts are.

11 We would like to make sure that the Fish and
12 Wildlife Service, as well as the other members of the
13 recovery team, have an opportunity to hear what you have
14 to say.

15 Bob?

16 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Dave. Notice of
17 this public meeting was published in the Federal
18 Register on April 26, 2007, beginning on page 20865.

19 As Dave mentioned, currently the public
20 comment period on the draft recovery plan ends at the
21 close of business on Monday, June 25, 2007. All
22 comments must be received by that time.

23 After review and consideration of your
24 comments and all other information gathered during this
25 comment period, the Fish and Wildlife Service will

1 publish a final recovery plan.

2 Purposes of this session are twofold: One,
3 to provide information on the draft recovery plan and,
4 two, to receive your comments. Comments on all aspects
5 of the draft plan are very important and will be
6 carefully considered.

7 Because of your -- of the importance of your
8 comments, it is necessary that we follow certain
9 procedures here this evening.

10 If you wish to make oral comments at the
11 session, please register at the sign-in table outside
12 the room. Fill out the slip and you'll get a card that
13 I'll call when we're ready for you to give your
14 comments.

15 When you register, indicate if you are
16 representing any agency or organization with your
17 comments.

18 When you're called to present your comments,
19 please come forward to one of the two microphones in the
20 front. Begin your presentation by stating your full
21 name, spell it, and indicate again if you are
22 representing an agency or an organization.

23 If you're reading comments, I would ask that
24 you take care to read them slowly enough for the court
25 reporter to understand and get an accurate transcript of

1 them for the record.

2 Also, if you do have a copy of your comments
3 that you could leave with the reporter, that again
4 insures that we have an accurate record of what you have
5 to say.

6 You will not be questioned in connection
7 with any of the comments you make. Your comments are
8 being recorded and are being preserved for the
9 administrative record.

10 Because the purpose of the session is to
11 receive the comments, we presume that any questions that
12 you might raise are for the record.

13 The Fish and Wildlife Service's formal
14 response to questions and issues raised during the
15 comment period, including here this evening, will be
16 published in the final notice for the recovery plan.

17 We will not respond to questions posed
18 during your statement.

19 Given that the other purpose of this session
20 is to provide information on the draft recovery plan for
21 the NSO, again, I would call your attention to the
22 information room just to the left of this one where we
23 do have several displays and a lot of information that
24 you may find helpful.

25 While we're taking comments here, we've

1 closed off the partition, but you can still access that
2 room through the hallway and then back in there to where
3 the displays and some of the staff are located.

4 Feel free to go back and forth between the
5 rooms. I would only ask that when you come back into
6 this room that you be considerate of the speakers and of
7 the reporter when you come back in.

8 Again, a reminder that the reporter will not
9 record any statements that are from the audience or that
10 are made to the audience. She will only be recording
11 comments that are made directly into the microphones
12 facing the front of the room.

13 Instead of presenting oral comments, you may
14 submit comments in writing or you may supplement any
15 comments that you make here this evening with written
16 comments. They may be submitted to the staff at the
17 registration table or they may -- they may be mailed to
18 the following address, which I'll give you in just a
19 minute. It's available at the registration and the
20 information tables, and that address is US Fish and
21 Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, 911 Northeast
22 11th Avenue, and that's in Portland, Oregon 97232.

23 You may also submit comments by fax, by
24 courier, by e-mail, or over the Internet. And details
25 on the methods for submitting comments in those ways are

1 available on a little card that, again, is at the
2 sign-in desk or in the information room.

3 Written comments are given the same
4 consideration as oral comments that are presented here
5 this evening.

6 We do have a number of speakers that have
7 indicated they wish to present comments, and so I would
8 ask that you try to limit your statement and your
9 comments to approximately three minutes so that we have
10 ample time to give everyone an opportunity to speak who
11 wishes to do so.

12 At this point we are ready for our first
13 speaker.

14 Susan Applegate, would you come to one of
15 the microphones, please. State your name for the record
16 and indicate if you're representing anyone with your
17 comments.

18 MS. APPLEGATE: Thank you for this
19 opportunity. My name is Susan, S-u-s-a-n, Applegate,
20 A-p-p-l-e-g-a-t-e, just like it sounds. I'm speaking as
21 an individual, but I am a board member of Oregon Wild as
22 an organization. That's a conservation organization
23 whose headquarters are in Portland.

24 I'm also a member of Umpqua Watersheds, and
25 a person who grew up here in the Northwest and loves

1 this -- the legacy of our native wild forests, the home
2 of the spotted owl.

3 I want to begin by saying that I was
4 interested to hear that there's going to be scientific
5 peer review. On the news there has been disturbing
6 references to Bush appointees manipulating scientific
7 data in order to have a certain outcome in recovery
8 plans.

9 And the Bush oversight committee -- this one
10 claims new studies show that too much old-growth forest
11 around a nest is bad for owl fitness. This is based on
12 a very small study with limited data where the
13 scientists who conducted this study warn, and I will
14 quote this, "We do not recommend that forest managers
15 use our modeling results as a prescription for managing
16 habitat until other similar studies have been
17 conducted."

18 I know there is enormous political pressure
19 on the scientists who are doing work for government
20 agencies that have repercussions in our natural
21 resources our public lands.

22 I know there's enormous pressure and -- I
23 hope that's not for me. And so I have -- I'm very
24 skeptical. I'm very, very alert to the unbiased and
25 excellent science that must accompany this recovery

1 plan.

2 The owl -- spotted owl has been in decline,
3 and that's a well-known fact. It has not had any period
4 of time where it has been advancing in population, and
5 so I'm rather -- I'm quite disappointed that this
6 recovery plan reduces the number of acres, the amount of
7 land set aside, old growth, that unique ecosystem that
8 the owl and a myriad of other flora and fauna require
9 for their existence, that that -- that this plan
10 actually reduces that number.

11 It also breaches some of the promises that
12 we had with the Northwest Forest Plan, and the Northwest
13 Forest Plan has had a very rocky road. I don't know
14 that it has ever had a single year where it has been
15 fully and faithfully followed.

16 MR. RUESINK: Ms. Applegate, that was our
17 three-minute buzzer so --

18 MS. APPLEGATE: Darn it.

19 MR. RUESINK: -- I will ask you to try to
20 wrap up here in the next minute or so.

21 MS. APPLEGATE: Okay. I've taken my time,
22 but I will say that I'm upset about post logging -- post
23 fire logging in owl habitat.

24 I cannot tell you how disturbing it is in
25 the wilderness or old-growth areas that the logging in

1 those areas post fire introduces so many invasive
2 species, and it's absolutely contrary to what those owls
3 need.

4 And with that I guess I will close. I
5 didn't make my points, but I will write you, and I want
6 to thank you for this opportunity to make my comments
7 public. Thank you.

8 MR. RUESINK: Thank you. And you can submit
9 those additional comments in writing.

10 MS. APPLGATE: Thank you.

11 MR. RUESINK: Our next speaker is Francis
12 Eatherington. Would you come to the microphone, please.

13 MS. EATHERINGTON: Hello. My name is
14 Frances Eatherington. That's F-r-a-n-c-i-s
15 E-a-t-h-e-r-i-n-g-t-o-n, and I work with Umpqua
16 Watersheds here in Roseburg, Oregon.

17 And I encourage you to consider all these
18 comments you hear today, and I believe that both options
19 that you subscribed up there this evening are inadequate
20 because both options reduce the current protected
21 habitat. According to Dominick DellaSala, a recovery
22 team member, Option 1 would reduce the Northwest Forest
23 Plan protected areas by 27 percent, and Option 2 by an
24 additional 820,000 acres.

25 The draft recovery plan itself fails to

1 document how much protected habitat would be lost under
2 each option in relation to the acres protected now in
3 late successional reserves.

4 Since the spotted owl population is
5 currently declining, the recovery plan should improve on
6 the Northwest Forest Plan. Instead it appears the
7 recovery plan is a map of how the forest plan can be
8 further weakened.

9 The Northwest Forest Plan is already not
10 protective enough because thousands of acres of spotted
11 owl habitat in old-growth forests can continue to be
12 logged in the matrix.

13 The recovery plan should have instead
14 strengthened the weak points of the Northwest Forest
15 Plan. For instance, new spotted owl nests discovered in
16 the matrix have been given a zero-foot logging buffer
17 while barred owl nest sites are given a five-acre
18 logging buffer.

19 The Roseburg BLM has justified protecting
20 the barred owl nest sites but not protecting the spotted
21 owl nest sites by stating that a viable owl population
22 in matrix lands are not essential for the conservation
23 of the species.

24 Just to wrap up here, I would like to say
25 that protecting all remaining spotted owl habitat in the

1 public forests will still allow sufficient logging to
2 continue, delivering a predictable supply of logs to
3 local mills and providing our community with
4 forest-related jobs by thinning in our overstocked,
5 fire-prone managed plantations.

6 Thinning our backlog of 50-year-old tree
7 plantations should be done before any more old growth is
8 converted to new tree farms. This would give the
9 service time to study the owl situation, as suggested in
10 the draft plan, and give more options in the future for
11 protecting the spotted owl threatened with extinction.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. RUESINK: Thank you for your comments.
14 I know that the three minutes goes by pretty quickly,
15 and so if you can summarize your comments and then
16 submit a longer version in writing, I think that would
17 be very helpful. Thank you.

18 Our next speaker is Pat Quinn.

19 MR. QUINN: Joseph Patrick Quinn, Q-u-i-n-n,
20 Camas Valley. Represent myself. I'm also a proud
21 member of Umpqua Watersheds, and I would like to preface
22 my remarks by thanking you for coming to Roseburg.

23 Two, I have not read the plan yet, so my
24 book reviewer -- not a book he hasn't read, and I'll
25 give my other comments later.

1 Three, I would like to second Mrs.
2 Applegate's incredulity or skepticism about the almost
3 axiomatic political pressure placed by the current
4 administration on scientific inquiries across the board.

5 I would also -- I've heard it mentioned that
6 one of the options throws the decision into the hands of
7 local, for example, BLM district managers.

8 I have lived for nearly 30 years next to a
9 piece of Coos Bay Wagon Road land that was heavily
10 clear-cut -- excuse me, regenerated in the early '70s.
11 They have not been back to do a damn thing except to lay
12 out the next clear-cut of the remaining old growth that
13 was stopped by the spotted owl in 1989.

14 Their own management document says they have
15 approximately 800,000 acres of totally unmanaged land in
16 western Oregon in immediate need of commercial and
17 precommercial thinning of which they accomplish
18 approximately a little over 1 percent a year. That's a
19 70- to 80-year backlog in maintenance they are either
20 unable are unwilling to conduct.

21 I would not trust them to enforce
22 protections for the spotted owl or any -- or the wood
23 rat for that matter. No offense, nothing personal
24 meant.

25 Also, as we know, the spotted owl is

1 well-known as a canary in a coal mine. We understand
2 that metaphor. I would submit at least in part the
3 barred owl is a red herring.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Quinn.

6 Doug Robertson, you're our next speaker.

7 MR. ROBERTSON: Good evening. My name is
8 Doug Robertson. I'm a chairman of the Douglas County
9 Board of Commissioners and also president of the
10 Association of O&C Counties and glad to be with you this
11 evening. I have a statement to read and a couple of
12 comments if that's permissible.

13 The Oregon California Railroad and Coos Bay
14 Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 provides the
15 statutory authority for the BLM to manage the O&C and
16 Coos Bay Wagon Road timberlands in Oregon.

17 Section 701b of the Federal Land Planning
18 Management Act states that in case of conflict of the
19 O&C Act, the O&C Act will prevail as it relates to the
20 management of timber resources.

21 The O&C Act requires a permanent source of
22 timber supply that shall be sold, cut, and removed from
23 approximately 2.2 million acres of O&C land and Coos Bay
24 Wagon Road lands on a sustained-yield basis.

25 The act's language is legislative history

1 and the courts conclude that the dominant use is timber
2 production for these lands.

3 Fifty percent of total receipts obtained
4 from the sale of timber and other forest products are
5 paid and distributed to the 18 O&C counties on an annual
6 basis. This revenue forms an essential part of county
7 budgets helping to pay for health and social services,
8 libraries, law enforcement, and many other public
9 services.

10 The BLM must manage the O&C and Coos Bay
11 Wagon Road lands in compliance with the requirements of
12 the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, NEPA,
13 and other applicable Acts.

14 The BLM is currently revising six western
15 Oregon land use plans, as you know. New plans must
16 answer the question regarding how the BLM should manage
17 the O&C statutory requirements of permanent timber
18 production on a sustained-yield basis while complying
19 with the Endangered Species Act.

20 The spotted owl recovery plan must answer
21 the same questions: How can the recovery plan achieve
22 protection and recovery for the spotted owl while
23 allowing for permanent timber production on a
24 sustained-yield basis on the O&C and Coos Bay Wagon Road
25 lands in western Oregon?

1 Option 2 provides the greatest opportunity
2 for allowing BLM to meet its statutory regulatory
3 requirements associated with the O&C Act and the
4 Endangered Species Act.

5 Adopting Option 2 would allow BLM to develop
6 resource management plans that would allow for, number
7 one, the conservation and recovery of the spotted owl,
8 and number two, permanent production of timber on a
9 sustained-yield basis, and number three, significant
10 revenues to counties to pay for essential public
11 services.

12 Option 2 is the best option because it
13 incorporates the most up-to-date scientific knowledge
14 and allows the land management agencies to place the
15 spotted owl protection areas where they will do the most
16 good for the owl.

17 While the draft recovery plan options
18 incorporate the latest scientific knowledge about the
19 NSO, it retains the longstanding habitat network
20 established almost 20 years ago.

21 The only difference in the two options is
22 that Option 2 allows the federal land managers to
23 identify the habitat blocks based on up-to-date,
24 site-specific habitat analysis and better-known owl
25 locations, whereas Option 1 slightly modifies a network

1 originally designed in 1992 based on limited owl
2 location information, generalized large-scale maps of
3 the region, and a less well developed understanding of
4 owl habitat needs.

5 The recovery plan needs to elaborate more on
6 how the barred owl populations are going to be reduced.
7 What is missing in the recovery plan is the lack of a
8 contingency plan if the federal agencies are not able to
9 control the barred owl population.

10 And let me just share with you in closing,
11 as perhaps others have, I had many people approach me
12 with a question after reading or listening to some of
13 the options being considered by Fish and Wildlife about
14 shooting barred owls.

15 And the response I've had, although I
16 realize that it's only a suggestion that is being
17 considered, has been, "This isn't right, is it?" or that
18 "They're certainly not really considering doing that,
19 are they?" And of course they are.

20 And the comments that resonated in a variety
21 of ways, number one, two species so closely connected
22 with one another that they interbreed, making a decision
23 to shoot one in hopes of protecting the other seems to
24 be a very questionable way to proceed.

25 And obviously the next step, and very easily

1 connecting the dots, are the harbor seals, the Stellar
2 sea lions, the birds, the gulls, and the cormorants that
3 are decimating the population of protected salmon.

4 So I would urge that we look at that option
5 very carefully. Thank you.

6 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Robertson. Do
7 you by chance have a copy of your comments that you
8 could leave with us?

9 MR. ROBERTSON: Yeah, I do.

10 MR. RUESINK: I think that would be very
11 helpful for the reporter.

12 MR. ROBERTSON: Be happy to do that.

13 THE COURT: Our next speaker is Seth Kirby.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My name is Seth Kirby,
15 S-e-t-h K-i-r-b-y. I work for Umpqua Watersheds.

16 I would like to thank you for involving the
17 public in this process and allowing comments to be
18 heard. I will also be submitting comments in writing
19 through the mail.

20 The recovery plan which has been proposed by
21 the United States Fish and Wildlife Service does not
22 properly insure protection for the NSO. Both of the
23 options are flawed and a better solution needs to be
24 found.

25 This plan is not entirely based on science

1 and is being used as a political tool to allow more
2 logging in old-growth forests.

3 The reduction of habitat blocks in Option 1
4 will not contribute to the goal of the greater owl
5 population. We need the forests protected at the
6 highest level to insure old-growth habitat remains for
7 the owl to survive and eventually thrive. We cannot
8 remap areas and expect a healthier habitat and improved
9 results.

10 Option 2 allows too much potential logging
11 of old-growth habitat. It is not based on science and
12 appears to simply be a political tool to allow more
13 logging on old-growth forests.

14 The ability to simply eliminate and/or
15 relocate habitat blocks is absurd and illogical. A new
16 option should be begun which is based on science and not
17 political influence.

18 It is good to see that this plan will be
19 peer viewed, and I hope that that is extended to the
20 next draft. The next draft should include more
21 old-growth habitat, not the ability to reduce it. Our
22 public lands should be thinned before any more old
23 growth is cut.

24 I want my children to grow up in the
25 Northwest with the ability to experience all that the

1 natural lands have to offer. It is important for their
2 survival and well-being to hike in old-growth forests,
3 drink clean water, and witness wild creatures.

4 The forests are sacred places to my family
5 and many other people, and I want them to be protected
6 as strongly as possible.

7 I look forward to an improved plan that will
8 help the spotted owl recover and protect our old-growth
9 forests.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Kirby.

12 Our next speaker is Bob Hoehne.

13 MR. HOEHNE: Thank you. I appreciate this
14 opportunity to give you comment. That's Hoehne,
15 H-o-e-h-n-e.

16 And I just kind of came back into town and
17 so I don't have a whole lot of real smooth notes here
18 like my comrades here. I wish I did.

19 But I would like to say that, like a lot of
20 people across the whole United States, the Endangered
21 Species Act we really look to it to save our fellow
22 species, whether they be fish or birds. A lot of people
23 consider it the Noah's Ark.

24 And I think at this point in time after all
25 these years for you to be coming to us with this plan

1 that gives two options that decreases the habitat for
2 the owl as a chance for survival is shameful actually.

3 At this point in time we count on you, the
4 Fish and Wildlife Service, to look after our fellow
5 animals, which have a lot to do with clean water the
6 rest of the habitat and the rest of the plants and the
7 animals depend upon.

8 So I'm disappointed that at this point you
9 come to us with a plan that takes away habitat from the
10 spotted owl.

11 I've lived across from a timber sale -- I've
12 lived with the spotted owls for about 20 years. As soon
13 as they clear-cut -- Roseburg Lumber clear-cut, I
14 couldn't hear the owls for about five or six years, and
15 I can testify -- I'm no scientist, but I've seen the
16 dirt and mud come down the creek for about five or six
17 years after. It's starting to recuperate now.

18 So I would suggest that you take all the
19 possible action you can to protect our fellow species,
20 not just the spotted owl but the salmon that depend on
21 the fresh water also.

22 And I encourage you to do that, and I also
23 expect you to do it.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Hoehne.

1 Shannon Applegate, you're our next speaker.

2 MS. APPLEGATE: My name is Shannon
3 Applegate. That's S-h-a-n-n-o-n, Applegate,
4 A-p-p-l-e-g-a-t-e. I'm here as an individual and as a
5 historian.

6 I have been involved in this community as an
7 observer and as someone involved in such things as the
8 318 Committee on Bureau of Land Management. I served as
9 chair of that in the 1990s. And I look at this event
10 today and hear you say that this is a plan that will
11 take -- stand 30 years and cost approximately \$200
12 million.

13 And I think of the differences in the decade
14 that's just passed and what we know in the present about
15 climate change and many other factors that weren't even
16 part of our thinking, in fact were ridiculed in the
17 1990s.

18 And so many of the meetings were in rooms
19 like this in this community. And so I am simply putting
20 in a cautionary word from a historian's perspective.

21 It is -- with the forest, as well as with
22 other things, this idea of short-term gain to somehow
23 bandage things together to try to make peace with our
24 social and economic interests and our environmental
25 interests is going to cause a lot of long-term pain.

1 And I think that we've had a chance to see
2 that already, and so I'm here as a historian tonight
3 making my notes that I will compare with the ones that I
4 made in the 1990s, and I wonder what we're learning.

5 Thank you.

6 MR. RUESINK: Thank you.

7 Deborah Michel, you're next.

8 MS. MICHEL: My name is Deborah Michel,
9 D-e-b-o-r-a-h M-i-c-h-e-l.

10 And I'm like Bob. I don't have a real
11 scientific thing. I just have a real simple point.
12 I've been working with the Northwest Forest Plan for a
13 while making comments on timber sales, and I felt like
14 the Northwest Forest Plan was not strong enough. The
15 NSOs are still declining.

16 So when I heard there was a new plan, I
17 thought, wow, somebody really cares. They're going to
18 put some teeth in this and make it stronger. And in
19 fact that's not the case. Both these options reduce the
20 habitat for the NSO.

21 So to me it just looks like another attempt
22 to get more trees out of these forests that really is
23 sustainable. That's all.

24 MR. RUESINK: Thank you.

25 Ross Mickey, you're the next speaker.

1 MR. MICKEY: Thank you for this opportunity.
2 My name is Ross Mickey, M-i-c-k-e-y. I'm with the
3 American Forest Resource Council.

4 The American Forest Resource Council
5 represents primary wood manufacturers in the West and
6 the tens of thousands of employees who live and play in
7 their rural communities.

8 AFRC is very concerned about the well-being
9 of all our wildlife species. Over the last 20 years we
10 have spent millions of dollars supporting basic wildlife
11 research to bats to salamanders to owls and, yes, the
12 northern spotted owl. One of these includes the longest
13 running spotted owl demographic study areas, which is
14 located in Washington state.

15 AFRC supports the adoption of Option 2 of
16 the draft recovery plan for the NSO. We support this
17 alternative because it uses the most up-to-date
18 scientific information while maintaining the historic
19 habitat network system proposed by the Interagency
20 Scientific Committee in the early 1990s.

21 The procedure by which this habitat network
22 is implemented in Option 2 is far superior to that used
23 in Option 1 in many ways.

24 Option 2 let's the spotted owl define the
25 most optimum habitat to be included in the network.

1 Option 1 relies on antiquated habitat
2 definitions to slightly modify the network developed 15
3 years ago using habitat maps drawn by over 100 different
4 people. These maps were so crude that they didn't even
5 match up between the different administrative units.

6 Option 2, on the other hand, let's the
7 spotted owl tell us what habitat they use. A novel
8 idea. Why rely on man-made definitions based more on
9 political than real science when we can use a definition
10 based on what the spotted owl actually deserves?

11 The rule set that will be used to define the
12 habitat network for the spotted owl in Option 2 is still
13 ultraconservative as it assumes that no spotted owls
14 will migrate between the large habitat blocks while at
15 the same time calls for the establishment of dispersal
16 habitat between them to insure that this actual
17 migration will occur.

18 Also, the size of each habitat block is 25
19 percent larger than what is needed to support a
20 self-sustaining population within each individual
21 habitat block without any immigration from outside that
22 block.

23 Each self-sustaining block is then placed
24 very close to another self-sustaining block to insure
25 that owls will in fact migrate between them.

1 Option 2 then expands this redundant system
2 from northern California to the Canadian border,
3 establishing a fail-safe system capable of healing any
4 break in the system caused by natural catastrophic
5 events such as wildfires and windstorms.

6 The system is designed to meet any physical
7 loss of habitat -- suitable habitat but not suitable
8 habitat loss due to invasion by competing species such
9 as the barred owl.

10 Without aggressive control of the barred owl
11 population, the extensive multimillion-acre habitat
12 system will be wasted. Millions of acres of physically
13 suitable habitat are currently void of spotted owls
14 while the larger, more aggressive barred owl thrives
15 there.

16 The barred owl has established itself
17 throughout the spotted owl range, growing in size every
18 day. The barred owl is not only decimating the spotted
19 owl population but all of our native owl species.

20 Some are claiming that the answer is
21 additional habitat protection. They say that what we
22 need is more habitat, not less. I fail to see how
23 providing more habitat for the barred owl is going to
24 help the spotted owl survive.

25 How will increasing the size of the barred

1 owl population by providing it more habitat help to
2 increase the size of the spotted owl population?

3 Look at it this way: If a neighborhood of,
4 say, 1,000 homes became uninhabitable due to a massive
5 invasion of rabid mice, would the solution be to build
6 1,000 more homes? Obviously not. You would first
7 eliminate the mice so the homes were habitable again.

8 In the case of the spotted owl, we first
9 have to make the millions of acres of the habitat we
10 currently have dedicated to the owl habitable again by
11 eliminating the barred owl.

12 If we find it infeasible either physically,
13 economically, or socially to control the barred owl,
14 then we need to think of a contingency plan to make sure
15 that the spotted owl will not go extinct.

16 I have more comments, but I will submit
17 those in writing. Thank you very much.

18 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Mickey. Do you
19 have a copy for the reporter? Thank you.

20 Mary Moffat, you are our next speaker.

21 MS. MOFFAT: My name is Mary Moffat,
22 M-o-f-f-a-t, and I'm a landowner in the coast range and
23 member of the Siuslaw Watershed Council.

24 Having lived in a few other countries before
25 I moved here in '72 I know how precious and unique the

1 old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest are, and I
2 was very saddened to see logging of them still happening
3 on this much land compared to what was there.

4 And to me the Northwest Forest Plan -- I got
5 involved with it as a citizen in an advisory thing they
6 had to do. I was reassured that at least that would
7 help.

8 So to find out that there's two new plans
9 that reduce the amount of old growth that's going to be
10 put aside, not just for the spotted owl but for
11 everything, we don't even know some of the stuff that's
12 in those lands. There's so few lands that we...

13 I just urge you to have the moral courage --
14 you know, I mean, slavery was profitable and it stopped.
15 We have to protect the old growth. It's the same kind
16 of principle. There are other ways to do it than
17 logging old growth.

18 And so I really urge you and I thank you
19 for -- I mean, the timber folks are good guys, the BLM
20 folks are good guys, but there's a lot of pressure. You
21 know that. And we've heard -- we know there's other
22 ways to get what we have.

23 And the other piece I was saddened about was
24 to see old growth logged for such cheap, cheap, cheap
25 prices. That's the public lands logged to private folks

1 were just -- I couldn't believe the amounts of money.
2 It's just so so wasteful that we're still doing that
3 now. We've got this priceless, priceless resource that
4 we need to keep. We just need to keep it.

5 There's good scientists out there that say
6 salvage logging has no ecological benefit, and we almost
7 know where the spotted owls hunt. They don't always
8 live where they hunt. So to say that they live here, we
9 don't always know where the land they use.

10 But I have seen logging where I live where
11 there was an owl -- spotted owl pair. They logged it
12 because the nest was not in the logging, and the owl is
13 not there anymore. So I know firsthand how logging not
14 in where they actually live can actually hurt. That
15 pair is gone.

16 So thank you for your time.

17 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Miss Moffat.

18 Paul Netter.

19 MR. METTER: My name is Paul Netter. It's
20 Paul, the way it's spelled, Netter, N-e-t-t-e-r, and I'm
21 here representing myself.

22 Basically the first problem I see with this
23 is it bothers me a lot that the recovery team is
24 supposed to be an advisory committee to other agencies
25 like the BLM and the Forest Service, and the recovery

1 team is seeking input and insight from them on how to
2 manage an endangered species.

3 Those bodies are not supposed to be having
4 input this early in the process. And it bothers me a
5 little bit that the results will inform the way they're
6 able to manage their lands and they're informing the way
7 they're supposed to manage. That is one of my biggest
8 concerns aside from the spotted owl and habitat
9 preservation.

10 Secondly, I'd like to point out, as
11 everybody else has already pointed out, that 7.7 million
12 acres is 27 percent smaller than the Northwest Forest
13 Plan designated habitat.

14 It seems like with the additional stress
15 that's put on the spotted owl between the barred owl,
16 global warming, and the other species that have to be
17 confined to a smaller amount of forest that there should
18 be more land over the Northwest Forest Plan designated
19 area. There should be perhaps 10 percent or 50 percent
20 or some percentage more than what was already
21 designated, not less.

22 And this is partially because the spotted
23 owl is an indicator species for the wildlife and forest
24 health. And if the spotted owl is doing poorly, it's a
25 very good indication that the health of the forest is

1 not so -- it's not well either.

2 And if this is because of some animal like
3 the barred owl stealing its habitat, perhaps there needs
4 to be additional indicator species to deal with it to
5 help the forest on.

6 It's a red herring to say that the causes
7 that are leading to the decline of the spotted owl are
8 not related to the way the forest is managed.

9 I believe it's also a red herring to say
10 that we can manage the forest for production of timber
11 and that can be done at the same time as protecting
12 habitat.

13 It's not the purpose of the United States
14 Fish and Wildlife Service to worry about the management.
15 It's their job to worry about the endangered species.

16 They should say absolutely what needs to be
17 done for the spotted owl and not worry about what the
18 BLM, Forest Service, and the two private timber
19 companies have at stake here.

20 That's part of why we appoint agencies like
21 that instead of electing them, because they're not
22 supposed to need to be accountable to the private
23 interests that are now allegedly supporting you guys.

24 And I appreciate this time for comments, for
25 what it will do.

1 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Netter.

2 Judith Osborn.

3 MS. OSBORN: My name is Judith Osborn,
4 O-s-b-o-r-n. I'm the executive director of the Umpqua
5 Watersheds.

6 Neither of the two options offered in the
7 recovery plan increases protection for the owl. In
8 spite of continuing decreasing numbers owls are
9 surviving and reproducing better on federal lands
10 managed under the Northwest Forest Plan than on
11 nonfederal lands where logging is much greater.

12 The annual rate the owl population declined
13 on nonfederal lands was more than twice that on federal
14 lands. Clearly we need more of the reserve strategy of
15 the Northwest Forest Plan, not less. That is not
16 provided under either option of this bill.

17 The fate of the owls is intimately tied to
18 the fate of our old-growth forests. We have here in
19 Douglas County a unique, immensely rich, and
20 irreplaceable forest, or at least we have the remnants
21 of what we once had.

22 And we will have even less of this
23 awe-inspiring resource if we allow either of these
24 options of this plan to become effective.

25 Our old-growth forests endow us with water

1 so clean and fresh that people come from all over the
2 world to fish in our watershed, to hike these trails,
3 and to breath the air purified by the trees.

4 The fate of the forest is intimately tied to
5 our human life. We can have jobs and the old growth.
6 There is decades of work to be done in our plantations.
7 We need to thin the overstocked, fire-prone managed
8 forests.

9 We need to make the right decisions now. It
10 is up to us to do all in our power to protect the
11 old-growth habitat, and neither of these options do
12 that. So I hope that you will reconsider and make a
13 better decision because we only have one chance.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. RUESINK: Thank you for your comments.

16 Doug Heiken.

17 MR. HEIKEN: My name is Doug Heiken. The
18 last name is spelled H-e-i-k-e-n. I'm here representing
19 Oregon Wild.

20 And I'd like to start by saying that I wish
21 that the Washington, DC, oversight committee was here
22 listening. That's the committee that Lynn Scarlet is
23 the chairperson of but she can't even remember the other
24 people who are on the committee, and they seem to have a
25 very strong influence on what's going on here, but yet

1 we don't even know who they are, how to reach them, and
2 how to influence them, and that's pretty frustrating for
3 the public. They'd get an earful if they were here.

4 I'd also encourage you to build a fire wall
5 between Fish and Wildlife Service and BLM, both in the
6 same department under the secretary of interior. But
7 the regulator and the regulative agency should not be in
8 such close ties to each other in this stage of the
9 process.

10 BLM clearly has an agenda and Fish and
11 Wildlife Service has a different agenda, which is to
12 protect the species, not to increase logging on our
13 public lands.

14 I was recently at a meeting in Wenatchee,
15 Washington, where a Fish and Wildlife Service official
16 said the spotted owl is declining so rapidly in
17 Washington state that we have to look beyond the
18 reserves and we have to protect all the spotted owl even
19 in the matrix in order to stop the precipitous decline
20 of this bird.

21 To me that says we need another option that
22 we don't even see here in the two that are in this
23 recovery plan. We need to protect all the old-growth
24 habitat and we need to restore a lot of what's been lost
25 due to clear-cutting.

1 I think the recovery team should take a
2 stand and oppose the BLM's western Oregon plan revision
3 process which would pull the plug -- or pull the rug out
4 from under the Northwest Forest Plan, which is an
5 integrated plan and requires the participation of both
6 the Forest Service and the BLM in order to function.

7 If we let BLM increase logging like they
8 want to, they will basically limit the ability of owls
9 to disperse between the Cascades and the Coast Range and
10 the Klamath Mountains which will isolate the owls in
11 these natural forestlands and dramatically increase the
12 risk of extinction for the spotted owl.

13 This Bush plan also deemphasizes the role of
14 habitat, which I think is irresponsible and misleading.
15 The plan complains that the Northwest Forest Plan
16 reserves can't stop the barred owl from invading, which
17 is only half the truth.

18 The real truth is that providing more and
19 larger habitat reserves provides the best hope that the
20 barred owl and the spotted owl can eventually coexist
21 together in our old-growth forest.

22 The recovery plan should expand the
23 reserves, not shrink them, especially when they're
24 facing increased threats from the barred owl, climate
25 change, fires, and so on.

1 Nonfederal landowners are not contributing
2 to the recovery of the owl like they were assumed to
3 when the interagency scientific committee was drafting
4 their plan.

5 So we either need to beef up the Forest
6 Practices Act, which is not likely, or we need to
7 dramatically increase the protection on federal lands to
8 compensate for the fact that nonfederal lands are not
9 pulling their weight.

10 Finally I want to say that the spotted owl
11 recovery could result in a win-win for people and the
12 spotted owl if the government would simply adopt a plan
13 to protect all the remaining mature old-growth forests
14 and shifting all the logging to thinning the dense young
15 plantations and creating better habitat. We would be
16 restoring the forest while creating some jobs and
17 providing wood as a by-product of that restoration.

18 Thank you for your time.

19 MR. RUESINK: Thank you.

20 Katie Weidman.

21 MS. WEIDMAN: I'm Katie Weidman,
22 W-e-i-d-m-a-n.

23 I'm just surprised that any plan for the
24 recovery of an endangered and threatened species would
25 actually recommend or suggest decreasing critical

1 habitat species. There's no scientific evidence that
2 logging in suitable habitat for spotted owls would help
3 them in any way, even peer-reviewed scientists, unless
4 it's really influenced by economics.

5 And there's a lot of evidence that owls
6 prefer a high canopy complex structure and lots of
7 downed wood and snags. And even if they're not living
8 in this habitat now, maybe they should be given an
9 opportunity to expand into the habitat while they're
10 recovering.

11 And so I made my point.

12 MR. RUESINK: Thank you for your comments.

13 Patrick Starnes.

14 MR. STARNES: Can you see that? My name is
15 Patrick Starnes, S-t-a-r-n-e-s. I'm a cabinetmaker. I
16 live in Lookingglass just west of Roseburg here. I
17 wanted to welcome you to the wonderful Umpqua and
18 picking out a lot of places -- beautiful places in
19 Oregon.

20 MR. RUESINK: Excuse me. Mr. Starnes, when
21 you refer to the map, if you'll be talking from that,
22 would you describe it for us. And is there a chance you
23 could leave that with us?

24 MR. STARNES: Yeah. This is your map, and
25 I'll leave that.

1 MR. RUESINK: Thank you.

2 MR. STARNES: I'll get into the details of
3 it if you'll give me time. I grew up just up the river,
4 up the South Umpqua behind us here in the little town of
5 Dillard as a kid. My dad worked at the Roseburg Forest
6 Products mill when I was a kid. In the '70s he was laid
7 off because of -- not because of the owl like we are
8 used to the layoffs now, but just because of the history
9 of the timber industry, as you know, is a boom-and-bust
10 industry.

11 And what a lot of us here -- I don't
12 represent any organization. I work with wood every day
13 as a cabinetmaker, but I'm not -- I live in this
14 environment, so I'm an environmentalist, and so I hope
15 that I can bridge the groups here today and that we
16 can -- that we can have a win-win situation. And that's
17 what I want to talk about.

18 This is an example of forests here in the
19 Umpqua, Umpqua National Forest. This is an example
20 that's probably common throughout the West Coast up in
21 Washington and northern California. But I also have a
22 larger map of the BLM forest.

23 What these colors are, are all the old
24 clear-cuts on the Umpqua National Forest. The Umpqua
25 National Forest is a million acres. There's a quarter

1 million acres of clear-cuts here.

2 The shaded gray areas are the LSRs, the owl
3 reserves. So I think you've heard it time and time
4 again is that the environmentalists agree that we need
5 to thin these plantations for the spotted owl to hope to
6 get those restored back to old-growth characteristics.
7 It will also protect us from fires in those areas.

8 These younger smaller forests are a lot more
9 prone to fire than the larger, thick bark, high-limbed
10 trees are.

11 And I do think that it's cool that you guys
12 have this 30-year vision, because I share this similar
13 vision with this plan and the BLM map as a 30-year plan.
14 Because what our communities need, one of the biggest
15 gripes about the forest plan, besides that the owl is
16 declining, but from the industry's point of view is that
17 we don't have a steady, stable, predictable supply of
18 timber.

19 And over the next 30 years we can do this
20 thinning and get 100 million board feet just in this
21 community every year, and that's what the industry
22 needs. And this is all the 20 inches or smaller, the
23 smaller forests -- or the smaller logs that most of the
24 mills are retooled for.

25 And I think this kind of thing is the kind

1 of thing that both industry and environmentalists can
2 support and that you need to incorporate it in your
3 recommendations to the Forest Service and the BLM to
4 encourage them to stop the regen harvests of the old
5 growth, more like a moratorium on old growth
6 regeneration, clear-cutting the old growth, until we
7 delist the owl and focus for 30 years on this thinning
8 of this forest here.

9 Here just in Douglas County on public lands
10 we have 400,000 acres of these federal clear-cuts that
11 we need to work on. That's a lot of work. The guys in
12 the Forest Service tell me they don't even have enough
13 people to catch up on the thinning. I don't know about
14 the BLM, but we have a lot of work to do. It's a
15 win-win situation.

16 And what's great about this thing today and
17 about what all of us wants is we want to delist the owl,
18 not because we've reduced the habitat or we've farmed
19 them out like we do our salmon, but because we truly
20 have protected their habitat, have restored this
21 habitat.

22 And I also agree with your plan on the
23 barred. I wish Doug Robertson was here. The counties,
24 the states, and the feds spent millions of dollars
25 fighting the invasive species Portuguese broom, the

1 French broom in our forests, and other species too.

2 And we can control an invasive species here
3 that -- and on our place, because I help my uncle manage
4 our 200 acres in Lookingglass. Our neighboring property
5 is an old-growth stand with a known spotted owl site,
6 which now has just been -- the spotted owls have been
7 displaced by the barred owls. You can hear them all the
8 time out at our place. And over in the valley is a
9 homeless female spotted owl.

10 And from what I understand, the study in
11 California within a week after they removed the barred
12 owls, they had spotted owls return. So I mean, that's
13 pretty telling of your study there.

14 But I agree with Mr. Mickey that we do need
15 to control the invasive species, we need to have a
16 moratorium on old-growth clear-cutting, we need to
17 advise the Forest Service and the BLM staff that until
18 we can delist the owl we need to spend the next 30 years
19 thinning the forests.

20 So this map is for your use.

21 MR. RUESINK: Thank you very much, Mr.
22 Starnes.

23 Chuck Schnautz.

24 MR. SCHNAUTZ: Very good, got that right.
25 My name is Chuck Schnautz. That's S-c-h-n-a-u-t-z. And

1 I'm with Umpqua Watersheds.

2 I think many of the speakers before covered
3 most of the subjects that I would speak to, but I would
4 say several things, and one is that while I understand
5 Commissioner Robertson's desire to cut timber because it
6 means dollars for our county, which is important, I
7 think that subject is separate from what we're talking
8 about here today, which is protection of an endangered
9 species.

10 I think that possibly following up on that,
11 what Mr. Starnes talked about may give a solution where
12 we can continue to protect that species and at the same
13 time produce more board feet of timber in the community.

14 I don't know about removing the barred owl.
15 I've just heard about that in the press in the last
16 short period of time.

17 I do know that removing old growth will
18 decrease the viability of the species. In Option 2 as
19 presented, and I admit that I've only very briefly
20 skimmed through this, but in Option 2 it seems that
21 we're asking forest land managers to manage an
22 endangered species.

23 And I think that in place of that we need
24 scientists who are in that business to be the ones to
25 decide where we cut timber and where we need to leave

1 habitat.

2 And my final point, which is an item that I
3 think is terribly critical to this whole thing, is who
4 monitors the process. I think it's naive to think that
5 land managers, if they're the ones that are monitoring
6 the process, that they're going to have the best
7 interests of the species at heart.

8 And I think, as Patrick Quinn said earlier,
9 the spotted owl is the canary in the coal mine, and I
10 think how we deal with the spotted owl will say a lot
11 about how we protect other species in the future.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. RUESINK: Thank you, Mr. Schnautz.

14 Carole Gale.

15 MS. GALE: I'm Carole Gale. That's

16 C-a-r-o-l-e G-a-l-e.

17 I don't have prepared remarks. I have lived
18 on Coos Bay Wagon Road in Lookingglass, and I've been
19 hearing about the difficulties of people living in this
20 area with reduced logging and so on as well as hearing
21 about the loss of habitat and animals and so on, and it
22 all concerns me.

23 I can't help but think that the old-growth
24 forest takes so long to grow that the invasion of the
25 barred owl is relatively short-term by comparison so

1 that preserving the old growth, which can take hundreds
2 of years to regenerate itself, cutting that would set us
3 back hundreds of years, and if there's only a tiny bit
4 of old growth left, that it -- there should be a
5 moratorium on cutting it and we should have thinning of
6 younger forests as needed, as has been discussed
7 already.

8 And I am aware of the logging going on
9 because I hear the logging trucks go by all day long
10 past my house on Coos Bay Wagon Road, and I'm sure some
11 of them are the thinner trees that need thinning, but
12 some of them are huge trees as well.

13 And I feel that it is the Fish and
14 Wildlife's brief to protect the wildlife. And the
15 timber industry, which has been the backbone of this
16 whole county, is also an important industry, but it
17 certainly seems that what Mr. Starnes said could work
18 where you have jobs in the managed plantations that have
19 smaller diameter trees.

20 And there -- whatever little bit of old
21 growth there is left, it should not be reduced by a new
22 plan that's called a habitat conservation plan but
23 actually seems to be a reduction of the habitat for the
24 owl.

25 And the owl is just one of many endangered

1 species. And given the global climate changes and the
2 kind of speed with which human changes visit upon nature
3 and whereas nature takes millennia to make changes and
4 human change goes so fast that we can't really see the
5 effects of it, I feel that we really need to give the
6 benefit of the doubt to the -- to the wildlife that's
7 struggling to continue to exist.

8 And so I would say that I don't support
9 either option on your forest plan that reduces habitat
10 for the old -- for the old growth spotted owl.

11 And I would just conclude with a quote from
12 Shakespeare from the *Merchant of Venice*. "You take my
13 life when you take the means by which I live." And the
14 habitat is the means by which the owl lives.

15 Thank you for listening.

16 MR. RUESINK: Thank you for your comments.

17 The last speaker that's currently registered
18 to provide comments is Amy Price. If any of the others
19 here in the audience wish to provide comments at this
20 time, I would encourage you to go to the sign-up table
21 and fill out a card and we'll make sure to give you an
22 opportunity to do so.

23 Go ahead, Miss Price.

24 MS. PRICE: Thank you for this opportunity
25 to comment. My name is Amy Price. That's A-m-y

1 P-r-i-c-e. I'm representing myself, but I am a wildlife
2 researcher for Oregon State University, and I have been
3 for over a decade.

4 Almost everything that I want to say has
5 been covered by the rest of the public here, but I did
6 want to encourage you folks to look to our neighbor to
7 the north and to look at Canada.

8 I don't know if you know -- you probably
9 do -- Canada and British Columbia only has a handful of
10 spotted owls, and they have recently been encouraged to
11 go out and capture each and every single one to have a
12 captive breeding, which is the only chance that that
13 whole nation in the province of British Columbia has for
14 recovery.

15 And to look at their mistakes in their
16 forest practices will show what could happen with just
17 the species of the spotted owl. And it's not just the
18 species of the spotted owl that Canada is losing.
19 There's a myriad of other species that they can't go out
20 and capture and start a captive breeding program.

21 So Option 1 or Option 2 or any option that
22 we decide on we need to look -- we need to know that we
23 are protecting everything, not just the species that we
24 can look at and we can survey that's a tangible species,
25 and to try and do anything to avoid this, and that would

1 require saving the habitat, and what everyone here said,
2 saving the old growth, looking at different forest
3 practices, whatever it takes to avoid the extreme thing
4 that's happening to our neighbor in the north.

5 That boundary that is a line between our two
6 countries isn't -- the spotted owls don't see that and
7 the other species don't see that.

8 But I just urge you to look deeply into what
9 you can do to make a plan that's viable. And I see a
10 lot of good things in here, but I also see that it needs
11 more.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. RUESINK: Thank you for your comments.

14 I have called the names of everyone that had
15 indicated they wished to provide comments this evening.
16 Again, if anyone in the audience wishes to provide
17 comments or a statement, please go to the sign-up desk
18 and we'll give you an opportunity to do so.

19 If we do not have other speakers, we will go
20 in recess at this time, and I would encourage you to go
21 over to the information room to look at some of the maps
22 and the information available and also to take advantage
23 of the fact that we do have knowledgeable staff from
24 Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management,
25 Forest Service here that will be able to provide you

1 additional information or answer any questions.

2 I'm not seeing anyone moving to the sign-up
3 table at this time, so I would like to take a recess,
4 and we will reconvene if we get additional speakers, and
5 the meeting will remain open until 9:30 this evening,
6 the scheduled time for the close.

7 So we are now in recess and we're off the
8 record.

9 (WHEREUPON, there was a
10 recess taken.)

11 MR. RUESINK: Back on. We are on the
12 record. It is now 9:30 p.m. On behalf of the US Fish
13 and Wildlife Service we appreciate the time and effort
14 that all of you took this evening to present your
15 comments. They have been very informative. They will
16 be fully considered in coming to a final decision.

17 Again, thanks for coming out this evening to
18 give us your comments on the Northern Spotted Owl
19 Recovery Plan. This session is closed. We're off the
20 record.

21 -o0o-

22

23

24

25

STATE OF OREGON)

) ss. C E R T I F I C A T E

County of Douglas)

I, LEANNE LAW, do hereby certify that:

At the time and place heretofore mentioned in the caption of the foregoing matter, I was a Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State of Oregon;

That at said time and place I reported in stenotypy all testimony adduced and proceedings had in the foregoing matter;

That thereafter my notes were reduced to a computer-aided transcript and that the foregoing transcript consisting of 66 pages is a true and correct transcript of all such testimony adduced and proceedings had and of the whole thereof, to the best of my ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 4th day of June 2007, in the City of Roseburg, County of Douglas, State of Oregon.



LeAnne Law
 LEANNE LAW
 Certified Shorthand Reporter
 Certificate No. 94-0285